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RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/USFJ PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 2363
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 6150
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7668
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2707
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3688
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3665
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS TOKYO 000312

SIPDIS

STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - IRAQ, MUNICH SECURITY
CONFERENCE, IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Top items on Tuesday morning included
a continued fall in public approval of Prime Minister
Aso and Nissan's massive layoff plan.

¶2. "Prime Minister Wins by Improving Security" On the
recent Iraqi provincial elections, the top circulation,
moderate Yomiuri editorialized (2/10): "The prolonged
stalemate in Iraq was partly caused by a sharp
religious sectarian rift. The victory of the camp
supporting Prime Minister Maliki reflected Iraqi
voters' wise judgment that national reconstruction
would be impossible without overcoming such religious
strife.... However, the country is still confronted
with many challenges. The Maliki administration needs
to deal with sources of conflict among religious groups
and ethnic tribes one by one."

¶3. "U.S., Russia, Europe Looking for Reconciliation" On
the Munich security conference, a correspondent for the
business-oriented Nikkei reported (2/10): "The U.S.,
Europe, and Russia are all aware of the need for them
to coordinate policies in order to deal with the
paramount security challenges engulfing the globalized
world. Given that the three parties now appear to be
ready for reconciliation and confidence-building, the
focus of attention will be paid to whether they can
produce specific achievements on such daunting tasks as
Middle East peace and the war on terrorism in
Afghanistan."

¶3. "Clash between Conservatives and Moderates" On
former Iranian President Khatami's decision to
challenge incumbent President Ahmadinejad in the June
presidential election, a Tehran-based reporter of the
liberal Asahi wrote (2/10): "The presidential race is
likely to become a battle between the conservatives and
moderates. Will Iran go back to a soft line toward the

international community in view of mounting public discontent over hyper-inflation at home? The election will set the future course for Iran, which is to mark the 30th anniversary of the Iranian revolution today."

13. "How to Review Strategy in Afghanistan" On Afghan President Karzai's call for political participation by moderate forces of the Taliban, the business-oriented Nikkei insisted in an editorial (2/10): "The deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan is very serious. The Afghan government must employ every tool in order to achieve a breakthrough.... Karzai has been faulted for labeling all anti-government elements as terrorists and thus not doing enough to incorporate moderate opponents into political process. It is high time for the Karzai administration to review its political strategy."

ZUMWALT